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New York

President: Ms. Al-Khalifa ..... (Bahrain)

In the absence of the President, Mrs. Mladineo (Croatia), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

Agenda item 10

The role of diamonds in fuelling conflict

Letter from Botswana transmitting the report on the progress made towards the implementation of the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme (A/61/589)

Draft resolution (A/61/L.27)

The Acting President: The Assembly will now hear an address by Mr. Festus G. Mogae, President of the Republic of Botswana.

Mr. Festus G. Mogae, President of the Republic of Botswana, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The Acting President: On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Excellency Mr. Festus Mogae, President of the Republic of Botswana, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President Mogae: In view of the wording of this agenda item, let me begin by stating that diamonds are a valuable resource. Clean diamonds have made and continue to make an enormous contribution to economic development and bring happiness to many people, especially during this time of the festive season.

Diamonds are one of Africa's major natural resources. About 65 per cent of the world's diamonds, worth about $8 billion per annum, are sourced from Africa. In southern Africa, more than 28,000 people are employed by the diamond industry. At the global level, about 10 million people are either directly or indirectly supported by the diamond industry.

Botswana owes its advances in development to the exploitation of minerals, especially diamonds, which account for about 33 per cent of gross domestic product, about 75 per cent of export earnings, and about 50 per cent of Government revenues. All mineral rights are vested in the State. Revenues earned through taxes, royalties and dividends from Government shareholding in the company that mines the diamonds accrue to the national coffers. Those are revenues that we have used to develop schools, health facilities and physical infrastructure.

It is against that background that Botswana, alongside the international community, is fully committed to working in partnership and cooperation with States members of the Kimberley Process to maintain and enhance the credibility of the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme and the legitimate diamond trade.

I am pleased to present to the General Assembly the annual report of the Kimberley Process. The Kimberley Process held its annual plenary in

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06-63974 (E)

Gabarone, Botswana, from 6 to 9 November 2006. The report gives an overview of the activities of the Kimberley Process during 2006, the challenges that the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme faces, and strategies agreed by the Gabarone plenary to address those challenges.

The Kimberley Process is a unique tripartite arrangement between Governments, non-governmental organizations and the diamond industry, whose main objective is to exclude conflict diamonds from the legitimate trade in rough stones.

Since its inception, the Kimberley Process has enabled closer interaction between participants, observers, applicants and various organizations, providing a valuable platform to consolidate the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme, as well as to explore ways and means of curbing the flow of illicit diamonds. In that way, the Kimberley Process has been instrumental in contributing to the prevention of conflict and the maintenance of peace and security.

The Kimberley Process remains open on a global, non-discriminatory basis to all countries and regional economic integration organizations willing and able to fulfil its requirements. In that regard, countries continue to apply to and join the Kimberley Process. During the current year, New Zealand and Bangladesh joined the Scheme, bringing the total number of participants to 47, representing 71 countries. That is so because the 25 European Union member States are represented by the European Commission as a single participant. With its current membership, the Kimberley Process now covers the vast majority of all States involved in trade in rough diamonds. A number of countries, such as Cape Verde, the Republic of the Congo, Gabon, Kazakhstan, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Liberia, Mali, Mexico, Swaziland, Tunisia and Turkey have expressed interest in joining. It is the desire of the Kimberley Process to see the widest possible participation. To that end, it continues to engage and encourage countries to do so.

The peer review mechanism, the quarterly statistical submissions and annual reporting by participants are major tools for monitoring the implementation of the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme by participants. As of the end of November 2006, 34 participants had received review visits. That compares with 19 for the same period last year. In all, a total of 43 of the 47 participants have received or invited review visits, thus ensuring the largest number of participants it has monitored under the peer review mechanism. Review visits are now increasingly seen not only as part of a long-term sustained process of implementation of the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme, but also as tools for technical assistance, thus serving the dual purpose of monitoring and support. Plans are under way to begin a second round of review visits to build on the lessons learned and successes of the first round of visits and thus to further strengthen the monitoring process.

Statistics that the Kimberley Process collects and analyses form an integral part of monitoring to ensure that conflict diamonds do not enter the legitimate trade in rough diamonds. Participants are required to submit statistics on a quarterly basis, and I am particularly pleased to report that all participants submitted statistics for 2005. That is an important improvement over 2004.

The annual analysis exercise enables specific concerns for individual participants to be brought out. Analyses of the 2005 statistics identified data discrepancies as the most common problem. The bulk of data discrepancies was, however, resolved through bilateral reconciliations by participants. In order to improve statistical reporting and to advance transparency, the Gabarone plenary agreed that, in future, summary data on trade and production by value and volume, as well as counts of certificates issued under the Certification Scheme, should be released.

During 2006, our major preoccupation has been the review of the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme itself. When the Certification Scheme was established in 2003, it was agreed that it would be subjected to periodic reviews to allow participants to conduct a detailed analysis of all its elements. The review was to include, among other things, consideration of the continuing need for the Certification Scheme, taking into account the perceptions of the participants and of the continued threat posed by conflict diamonds at the time of the review. It was further agreed that the first review would be conducted within three years of its implementation. As the Certification Scheme was implemented in July 2003, the review had to be undertaken and concluded in time for presentation to the Gabarone plenary. Indeed, preparations for the review started at the Gatineau, Canada, plenary, where an ad hoc working group chaired by Canada was

established. The mechanics of the review were agreed during the Moscow plenary.

The review was completed and presented to the Gabarone plenary for consideration and adoption. In broad terms, the review focused on the following three main areas: first, the impact of the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme on the international trade in rough diamonds and the extent to which the Scheme has been effective in preventing the flow of conflict diamonds into the legitimate trade in rough diamonds; secondly, the technical provisions of the Scheme and whether they are functioning as well as planned or require improvement; and thirdly, the operations of the Scheme, their effectiveness and efficiency.

The findings of the review are that all available data suggest that the majority of the international trade in rough diamonds is now carried out within the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme. Since the implementation of the Certification Scheme in 2003, it has contributed to substantial increases in the volume and value of rough diamonds exported through official channels in countries previously affected by conflict diamonds. The technical provisions of the Certification Scheme were found to be working well overall. They were being enforced through a number of seizures of irregular shipments and prosecutions for infringement of the Certification Scheme regulations by various participants.

However, as can be expected with an international system of such complexity, technical problems continue to be encountered. The Kimberley Process continues to address those emerging challenges. During the review, suggestions were made regarding possible solutions for dealing with technical problems. Many of those suggestions were captured in the report and presented in the form of recommendations.

Effective implementation of internal controls is one of the issues that were identified in the review as an important challenge. A number of recommendations were put forward to address it. Given that internal controls form the very foundation of the Certification Scheme, recommendations in this area require immediate implementation, as internal controls and their effectiveness remain the major priority of the Process.

On the operations of the system, the findings of the review are that the collection and analysis of statistics, as well as the peer review monitoring systems, are not only working well but remain essential tools. Evidently, given the achievements of the Certification Scheme to date, there can be no doubt that it must be continued and improved, as appropriate. Participants, observers and other stakeholders made many suggestions in the areas of statistical requirements and the peer review monitoring system. The majority of those suggestions have been captured in the recommendations.

The report of the review contained more than 40 recommendations. The Gaborone Plenary endorsed them following full and constructive deliberations. In terms of the rules of procedure of the Kimberley Process, the report will be translated into all the working languages of the Kimberley Process, which are English, French, Portuguese, Spanish and Russian — unfortunately, no African language. That is similar to the United Nations talking about Africa, with no African language.

There is overwhelming evidence that the introduction of the Certification Scheme has had a positive impact on reducing the trade in conflict diamonds. However, the mining of diamonds in northern Côte d'Ivoire, which is under rebel control, presents a very difficult and challenging situation. The Kimberley Process is seriously disturbed by the leakage of Ivorian diamonds into the legitimate trade in rough diamonds. The problem of diamonds from Côte d'Ivoire is not new, but it is one that continues to plague the Kimberley Process. Its solution will require the collective resolve of the international community.

Côte d'Ivoire prohibited the export of diamonds from its territory as far back as 2002. That prohibition is still in force. Consequently, since the beginning of the implementation of the Certification Scheme, exports of diamonds from Côte d'Ivoire have been banned by the authorities in that country. The introduction of rough diamonds into the legitimate diamond trade not only threatens the integrity and credibility of the Kimberley Process but also represents an area of grave concern to the international community.

In addition to the nine-point resolution that the Kimberley Process adopted at the Moscow Plenary to stop Ivorian diamonds from entering the legitimate trade in rough diamonds, the Security Council imposed sanctions on exports of Ivorian diamonds in December

2005. That decision effectively prohibited all States — whether Kimberley Process participants or not — from dealing in Ivorian diamonds.

In implementing the nine-point resolution, the Kimberley Process conducted a survey of participants in 2006 to find out if any diamonds suspected of originating from Côte d'Ivoire had entered the territory of any of the participants. To date, only one participant has reported confiscation of a shipment of rough diamonds suspected of being of Côte d'Ivoire origin.

The situation concerning Côte d'Ivoire's diamonds was discussed at length during the Gaborone Plenary, and a number of measures were agreed to help contain the leakage of Ivorian diamonds into the legitimate trade. Those measures will remain a priority of the Kimberley Process until the problem is resolved. Of course, other efforts aimed at resolving the Côte d'Ivoire conflict must be intensified, especially as diamonds are not the cause of the conflict.

I wish to commend the Government of Liberia for its strong determination to meet the requirements of the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme. We welcome the readiness of the Government of Liberia constructively to engage the Kimberley Process on the relevant issues and its preparedness to cooperate in the search for solutions.

At the invitation of the Liberia Minister of Lands, Mines and Energy, a Kimberley Process mission was sent to Liberia in May 2006. That expert mission was undertaken against the backdrop of an earlier visit, in February 2005. The 2006 mission was mandated to, among other things, assess the measures taken by the Liberian Government to establishment a transparent, effective and verifiable system to implement the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme, with particular focus on the establishment of a system of internal controls.

The expert mission reported that, in spite of the post-conflict difficulties that Liberia faces, the country has made considerable progress in implementing the recommendations of the February 2005 mission. It found that the biggest challenge facing the country was the establishment of internal controls. On that front, Liberia is receiving technical assistance from the United Nations Mission in Liberia; the United States Government, which, through the Futures Group, has a consultant working with the Liberian Ministry of Lands, Mines and Energy; the United Nations Development Programme; and private-sector organizations such as De Beers and the Dubai Diamond Exchange.

I am therefore pleased to state that Liberia has made a great deal of progress in implementing the recommendations of the May 2006 mission. I am sure that I speak for everyone when I say that we will continue to encourage others to support Liberia in its endeavours to prepare itself to meet the requirements of and join the Certification Scheme once sanctions are lifted, which I hope will happen soon.

The Kimberley Process has, through its peer review mechanism, recognized that some participants may require technical assistance to improve or enhance their capacity fully to implement the Certification Scheme. In its role as informal coordinator for technical assistance, the United States has identified several major assistance programmes, which are now being implemented. In addition, the United States has had a long-standing assistance programme in Sierra Leone. The United Nations Development Programme is also helping to foster cooperation among the diamond-producing countries of the Mano River Union and sponsored a conference in June 2006 to promote regional harmonization of policies. The World Diamond Council has also provided technical assistance and training to many participants over the years.

Let me conclude by taking this opportunity to express our deep gratitude for the assistance and cooperation of the United Nations, which has been, and continues to be, extended to us to the Kimberley Process and in particular to Botswana as its Chair. Without the support and cooperation of the United Nations, the Kimberley Process would not have been able to visit northern Côte d'Ivoire to assess at first hand diamond mining activity in that part of the country, and to understand the challenges that the situation presents to us all. I am sure that the Kimberley Process will continue to rely on this support in its endeavour to eliminate conflicts diamonds. I reiterate the fact that the Kimberley Process is committed to working tirelessly to make the diamond industry one of which the international community can be truly proud and, above all, an industry that continues to make a positive difference in the lives of many people around the world.

I wish to end by congratulating the European Community on its imminent assumption of the Chair of the Kimberley Process in January 2007. I welcome the leadership of the European Community, which represents 25 members of the European Union. The European Community can count on the strong and assured support of India as Vice-Chair and, indeed, that of Botswana as immediate former Chair. The combined leadership of the European Community and India should enable us to effectively address the challenges that the Kimberley Process has identified.

The Acting President: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the Republic of Botswana for the statement he has just made.

Mr. Festus G. Mogae, President of the Republic of Botswana, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

Mr. McNee (Canada): It is my honour to address the General Assembly today on behalf of Canada, Australia and New Zealand.

Let me to begin by congratulating His Excellency the President of Botswana on his very cogent statement today and congratulate Botswana on a successful term as Chair of the Kimberley Process in 2006. His report and the draft resolution that we are adopting today are testament to the strong leadership provided by Botswana in the face of serious and challenging issues that have confronted the Kimberley Process over the past year.

Let me also take this opportunity to welcome the European Community as the incoming Kimberley Process Chair for 2007, as well as India as the Vice-Chair. We look forward to working with your delegations as we continue to advance the implementation and the strengthening of the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme.

Canada, Australia and New Zealand remain fully supportive of the Kimberley Process, which advances human security and the prevention of conflict by preventing conflict diamonds from penetrating the legitimate diamond market. Recognizing these objectives, New Zealand recently joined Canada and Australia as participant members of the Kimberley Process.

The Certification Scheme is working, and has already had a major impact on the global diamond trade, thanks in large measure to the comprehensive scope of the scheme. The Certification Scheme not only deprives criminals and non-State armed groups from easy access to capital, but has also improved the revenue-generating capacity of Governments formerly affected by conflict diamonds, such as Angola, Sierra Leone and the Democratic Republic of Congo. The impact of this shift in resource flows on the international community's conflict prevention and conflict resolution efforts has been significant.

We are pleased to note the constructive spirit in which Kimberley Process Governments, industry and civil society partners continue to effectively implement and enforce key Kimberley commitments. Canada, Australia and New Zealand are particularly pleased by the mobilization of the Kimberley Process community in response to allegations by the United Nations Group of Experts regarding Côte d'Ivoire that Ivorian conflict diamonds have been passing through third countries, including Kimberley Process members.

To address the situation of one Kimberly Process member country, a Special Envoy of the Chair of the Process visited senior officials in Ghana between 30 October and 1 November, and, at the November plenary, the Kimberley Process subsequently endorsed an action plan intended to remedy the weaknesses identified in Ghana's system of internal controls.

We note with satisfaction that numerous offers of technical assistance for the implementation of these measures have been made by Kimberley Process participants and observers, and we are pleased by the proactive role the Kimberley Process has played in addressing this situation. The Kimberley Process will continue to work with Ghana towards prompt implementation of this action plan.

Canada, Australia and New Zealand are also pleased that the Kimberley Process has adopted the report of the third year review, which provides an overview of the progress made by the Kimberley Process since its implementation in 2003 and outlines a blueprint for the ongoing improvement of the Process, articulating a number of concrete measures that may be taken to this effect. We encourage all Member States and relevant United Nations institutions and bodies to cooperate with the Kimberley Process in the implementation of these measures.

Canada, Australia and New Zealand welcome the elevation of the group on alluvial production — formerly a sub-group under the aegis of the working

group on monitoring — to the status of a full working group. As a sub-group, this group has already proved its usefulness, and we are confident that Angola, as the 2007 Chair of the group, will provide the leadership required to ensure that the group continues to enhance the Kimberly Process' ability to respond to the challenges facing artisanal-alluvial producers.

(*spoke in French*)

The Kimberley Process is making a major contribution in breaking the link between natural resources and armed conflict, and stands as a living testament to what can be achieved through the honest partnership of Governments, the United Nations, the private sector and civil society. It is — and will remain — an essential tool for our ongoing efforts to prevent conflict, and we look forward to strengthening and deepening its implementation and enforcement in the months ahead.

Mr. Mbuende (Namibia): It gives me pleasure to participate in the debate on agenda item 10 on the role of diamonds in fuelling conflicts, in general, and on the Chair's report on breaking the link between the illicit transaction of rough diamonds and armed conflict as a contribution to the prevention and settlement of conflicts, in particular.

Namibia supports the draft resolution on the item, which we have co-sponsored for two reasons primarily. First, it is an expression of our commitment to international peace and security and particularly to conflict prevention and resolution. Secondly, it is an expression of Namibia's commitment to protect the integrity of our diamond industry.

We are conscious of the relationship between conflicts and natural resources. Natural resources such as diamonds, oil, timber, gold, copper, water and land have had the potential to generate conflict. Some conflicts have been engendered by a struggle over the control of natural resources. In such cases, the conflict was an expression of competition over the control and utilization of resources. The party that had control over the resources used the revenues derived therefrom to finance its war efforts. There are also other instances where resources are not necessarily the cause of conflict but in which the parties to the conflict use revenues from natural resources to sustain it. Diamonds have been used in that regard, hence the expression "blood diamonds".

Namibia has committed itself to protecting the integrity of its diamond industry by ensuring that its diamonds are not contaminated by blood diamonds. We also want to ensure that our industry does not whitewash blood diamonds. We cannot allow one of our most important industries to undermine our commitment to international peace and security. It is not only our standing and credibility that is at stake but also the very existence of the industry. The diamond industry is too important for the development of our country, and its integrity and long-term sustainability must be ensured. Transparency in the marketing of our diamonds is of utmost importance in that regard. It was against that background that Namibia joined the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme.

It is our considered opinion that the Kimberley Process guarantees transparency in the marketing of our diamonds. It also provides a unique opportunity for cooperation among diamond-producing countries. The Kimberly Process may, in fact, be regarded as a moral marketing cartel of the diamond-producing countries. We are very pleased to note that this cartel has been growing and that most of the rough diamonds traded internationally today are of conflict-free origin.

It is important to note that there have been positive developments in a number of diamond-producing countries that were at war, such as Angola, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Liberia and Sierra Leone. Those countries are engaged in peacebuilding processes and have either taken measures to ensure, or are in the process of ensuring, that diamonds are used for the promotion of development rather than for fuelling conflicts. That does not mean that those countries are fully compliant with the Kimberley Process; what is important is to acknowledge that an environment that can lead to full compliance has been created.

Allow me to pay special tribute to the sister Republic of Botswana that has led the Kimberley Process in 2006 and during whose tenure a number of positive developments took place. Namibia would also like to congratulate the European Community and India, which are to assume the chairmanship and vice-chairmanship, respectively, of the Kimberley Process for 2007. Namibia would like to assure them of its full cooperation in ensuring that their mandates are crowned with success.

Ms. Barrett (United States of America): The United States is pleased to sponsor draft resolution A/61/L.27, on the role of diamonds in fuelling conflict. We have made great strides in controlling the flow of conflict diamonds since the late 1990s witnessed brutal atrocities in Africa. Governments have joined forces with the diamond industry and civil society to control and monitor international trade in rough diamonds through the Kimberley Process. We join those in the international community who commend the Kimberley Process for dramatically reducing the flow of conflict diamonds and thus contributing to regional security, peace and stability.

Through the multilateral efforts of the Kimberley Process, we have made remarkable progress in a relatively short period of time to control conflict diamonds. Under the bold leadership this year of the Botswana Government, Kimberley Process participants took further steps to increase controls on the international diamond trade including calls for increased Government oversight of the industry.

Kimberley Process participants have been generous with technical assistance to help diamond-producing countries implement controls, but we encourage other donors to step forward to help diamond producers build capacity to monitor the diamond trade from mine to export. The cooperation of the diamond industry and its commitment to a zero-tolerance policy towards conflict diamonds has been essential to Kimberley Process efforts. The Kimberley Process has been made stronger by the efforts of civil society to identify emerging problems and promote constructive solutions.

The Kimberley Process should not rest on its laurels. Much has been accomplished, but the trade in conflict diamonds remains a threat to some of the most fragile States around the globe. The Kimberley Process will need to remain vigilant and respond quickly when evidence emerges that diamonds may be financing conflict or threatening regional stability. We appreciate the European Community's willingness to take over the role of chair of the Kimberley Process in 2007, and look forward to a year of continued close cooperation in the efforts to control conflict diamonds.

Mr. Chulkov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): First, allow me, on behalf of the Russian Federation, to congratulate our colleagues from Botswana for their successful performance of their function, this year, as Chair of the Kimberley Process, in particular, the effective work on the preparation and agreement on the draft resolution for this session of the General Assembly, entitled, "The role of diamonds in fuelling conflict: breaking the link between the illicit transaction of rough diamonds and armed conflict as a contribution to prevention and settlement of conflicts" (A/61/L.27).

In our view the Kimberley Process has, to date, made substantial progress towards achieving its main goals and has significantly strengthened its authority. It is essential to further increase the efforts of the international community, including through strengthening the potential of the United Nations and the decisions taken to resolve the issue of monitoring the mining and trade of conflict diamonds, taking into account the continuing armed conflicts in several African countries.

It is clear that the growth in the effectiveness of the Kimberley Process depend directly on ensuring the universality of its membership and harmonization of the actions of all of its working groups. Those were the main issues focused on by Russia during its chairmanship of 2005. Botswana — whose chairmanship we greatly appreciate — did the same this year.

In this context, I would like to note that, given the importance of the diamond business and its specific nature, it is important to expand the number of participants, as well as observers, of the Kimberley Process by including the organizations that form the infrastructure of the world market, namely banks and insurance and diamond-shipping companies.

The draft resolution that we are about to adopt today reflects the substantial progress and activity achieved under the aegis of the Kimberley Process during 2006. However, we are convinced that much still remains to be done to increase the effectiveness of the implementation of the mandate of this process. In future, we will need to strengthen one of its main bases, which is the use of the international Kimberley Process Certification Scheme, which is designed to ensure real monitoring and control of the international movement of diamonds, guaranteeing feedback between exporters and importers.

For its part, the Russian Federation, including State entities, the diamond industry and civil society, is ready to continue to make every possible effort within

the United Nations, the Kimberley Process and other international organizations and forums, and also on a bilateral basis, in order to prevent the use of diamonds to fuel international conflicts. We call on other United Nations members to do this as well, particularly those who have still not joined the Kimberley Process.

In conclusion, I would like to wish the European Community as Chair and India as Vice-Chair of the Kimberley Process next year every success in their important posts and ensure them that the Russian Federation will continue to participate most actively and cooperate actively in the Kimberley Process.

Mr. Barnes (Liberia): The Liberian delegation cherishes the opportunity to participate in the current General Assembly consideration of agenda item 10, entitled "The role of diamonds in fuelling conflict".

Since its establishment, the United Nations has so far succeeded in averting the recurrence of a third global war. However, it is noteworthy that we have not been successful in eliminating inter-State and civil conflicts or removed their causes.

In this context, Liberia, as a country that is emerging from a devastating civil conflict, knows only too well the role a precious commodity such as diamonds can play in prolonging conflicts and its destabilizing consequences, as witnessed in the Mano River subregion. Through it all, Liberians have learned the hard way, thus enabling us to finally renounce war and embrace peace with a commitment to build a democratic society in which the interests of all are served and basic rights are protected. To this end, I wish to echo the gratitude of the Government and people of Liberia to Member States, specialized agencies and the United Nations system, particularly the African Union (AU) and the United States of America and the European Union, for their continued overwhelming support during and after our civil conflict.

In just three years, the recognition of the Kimberley Process by the United Nations Security Council and this great body as an effective mechanism for eliminating conflict diamonds from the legal trade of rough diamonds has paid considerable dividends in the resolution of conflicts around the globe. I, therefore, heartily congratulate Botswana for the very professional and effective manner in which the affairs of the Kimberley Process have been conducted, and for the comprehensive report contained in document A/61/589, which highlights the progress achieved thus far and the challenges ahead. Similarly, my felicitations go to the European Community and India as incoming Chair and Vice-Chair, respectively, with the expression of deep satisfaction that the Kimberley Process will continue to excel under their illustrious leadership.

Liberia's sponsorship of draft resolution A/61/L.27 speaks to its determination and commitment to address the ills that necessitated the imposition of sanctions by the United Nations Security Council. The draft text underscores the recognition of the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme as the best alternative solution against trafficking in conflict diamonds and reaffirms the commitment of the international community to resolve the dangers posed by the illicit trading of rough diamonds. I, therefore, recommend its unanimous adoption by the Assembly.

The Government of Liberia is very pleased with the exceptional cooperation it has continued to receive from the Kimberley Process through technical support and training programmes that are aimed at capacity-building, in compliance with the requirements for lifting the sanctions on the exportation of rough diamonds. The Government is also deeply encouraged by the positive results of the assessment mission of the Kimberley Process to Liberia in May 2006. We were also pleased to participate in the recent Gaborone plenary meeting in November 2006, which afforded our Government an excellent opportunity to outline the progress achieved regarding the possibility of lifting the sanctions.

In this connection, I am pleased to reiterate some of the concrete measures that have been undertaken by the Government of Liberia relative to compliance with the Kimberley Process. These include the revision of mineral and mining regulations; the training of mineral inspectors and mining agents, in addition to those who are currently receiving diamond valuation training in Kimberley, South Africa; the construction of Government diamond offices with the assistance of De Beers and the Dubai Diamond Exchange and providing gemmology equipment and furnishings; conducting seminars for miners, brokers, dealers and exporters so as to ensure better awareness of the new regulations; the enhancement of cooperation and partnership with the United Nations Mission in Liberia, which assisted in the construction of our regional offices; developing a strict mechanism of control and

establishing a chain of custody, allowing the Government to track diamonds from mining site to exportation; and technical cooperation and the exchange of useful information between Government diamond officials from Liberia and Sierra Leone, which further strengthened the renewed cordial relations between these two Mano River Basin countries. In addition, the Government of Liberia conducted a workshop on diamonds for development in Monrovia, the purpose of which was to ensure that the proper mechanisms are implemented so as to make certain that the proceeds accrued from the sale of diamonds are not used to fuel conflicts, but rather to promote social and economic development for the Liberian people.

In addition to the aforementioned measures, the Government has identified four priority areas in the peacebuilding and recovery process, involving security, the rule of law and good governance, economic revitalization and basic services and infrastructure development.

As Liberians, we have learned from the painful experience of war. Whether rightly or wrongly, we all share a collective guilt in the systematic destruction of our beloved country, Hence, the overall task of reconstruction remains the inescapable responsibility of Liberians. Ultimately, this will require difficult choices, involving, among other things, fiscal prudence, the wise use of limited resources and the adoption of policies that are sensitive to the needs of citizens.

In essence, the efforts of the Administration are aimed at providing for the basic needs of our citizenry through the effective use of our existing resources before appealing to the goodwill of the international community. Our people are eager to reap the dividends of peace, which the Government must deliver quickly, without fail. It is in this context that, on behalf of my fellow compatriots, I call for the urgent lifting of the United Nations sanctions imposed on the exportation of rough diamonds from Liberia, which has fully complied with the requirements thereof.

Mr. Mahiga (United Republic of Tanzania): The United Republic of Tanzania joins in thanking Mr. Festus Gontebanye Mogae, President of the Republic of Botswana, for introducing the 2006 report of the Kimberley Process to this body.

Tanzania is acutely conscious of the fact that the Kimberley Process was born as a response to public revulsion and a grass-roots movement against blood diamonds — diamonds extracted from conflict zones and traded legally and illegally to finance wars in countries of origin and beyond at enormous and unconscionable sacrifice of the lives of innocent civilians, mostly women and children.

The Kimberley Process was the right thing to do. It remains the right framework to combat the trade in diamonds from conflict zones. The Kimberley Process Certification Scheme, which established an internationally recognized certification system for rough diamonds as well as national export and import standards, is a beginning step that deserves support from all of us.

We welcome the third-year review of the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme, as requested under resolution 60/182. We commend the report for its balance and objectivity. The collaboration between Governments, industry and civil society must be sustained and strengthened.

We also welcome the technical assistance rendered to enhance capacity-building for implementation of the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme. This is an area of significant importance if loopholes attributable to capacity issues are to be plugged.

We also commend initiatives meant to promote public-private partnership in the diamond sector, such as the De Beers community development programme, in partnership with our Government, to benefit local populations in diamond-producing areas. This is a true illustration of the positive benefits of the legitimate diamond trade with and in producing countries. Such partnership needs to be broadened and reinforced as a way of attracting greater public confidence in the fair and equitable exploitation of resources in the interests of all stakeholders, including local communities.

We note that the 2006 report on the Kimberley Process did not seek to gloss over the deficiencies facing the mechanism. Despite a United Nations embargo, conflict diamonds continue to be traded. What needs to be done is to strengthen the Certification Scheme by promoting a rigorous monitoring and standards programme. Illegal trafficking in diamonds by rebel groups and non-State entities and their associated networks need special, coordinated

strategies by enforcement agencies involved in the process.

In Africa, the people of Côte d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Liberia, Sierra Leone and Angola have suffered immensely as a result of diamond-financed conflict. We can never do enough to alleviate their pain. However, we must never be found to have failed in establishing credible mechanisms to combat the phenomenon of blood diamonds.

The Kimberley Process is a voluntary scheme. It is not a perfect arrangement. It is something that we are able to agree on under current conditions. It is a framework we continue to strengthen and improve. We must also continue to be sensitive to our collective commitment to ensuring that natural resources are an endowment that promotes the welfare and development of countries and their peoples. A strengthened regulatory and monitoring regime will serve that objective better.

In our view, the spirit and the commitments underwriting the Kimberley Process represent a step in the right direction.

Mr. Pemagbi (Sierra Leone): As a participating State in the Process Certification Scheme, Sierra Leone has the honour to join in welcoming the President of Botswana, Mr. Festus G. Mogae, to the General Assembly, and to thank him for his presentation of the latest report of the Process to the Assembly. My delegation associates itself with his statement and is pleased to co-sponsor the draft resolution contained in document A/61/L.27.

The United Nations and the international community are aware of the painful and devastating impact that conflict or so-called blood diamonds have had on the peace, security and well-being of Sierra Leone. Indeed, it is no surprise that Sierra Leone has been used — and in many cases overused — as a typical example of the link between the illicit trade in rough diamonds, the proliferation of small arms and light weapons, the prolongation of armed conflicts and the systematic violations of human rights associated with such conflicts.

As a diamond-producing country, Sierra Leone has therefore faithfully participated in the Certification Scheme since its inception. We have also made our own modest contribution to the success that the Scheme continues to enjoy as a transparent, inclusive, non-discriminatory, credible and pragmatic global partnership aimed at curbing and eliminating the trade in conflict diamonds. Based on our own experience, we believe that the Scheme has become a viable mechanism for the promotion of international peace, security and economic cooperation. In its capacity as a member of the sub-group on Alluvial Mining, and its coordinator for West Africa, Sierra Leone is actively involved in the exchange of views on best practices in the area of alluvial production.

Three years before the Process was established, and conscious of the negative role that diamonds were playing in fuelling the rebel war in Sierra Leone, the Government suspended the export of rough diamonds for approximately three months, in order to expedite the establishment and operation of a certification regime for rough diamonds exported from Sierra Leone. With the support of the Security Council and the assistance of the international community, including the diamond industry and non-governmental experts, the Certification of Origin regime for trade in diamonds paved the way for the adoption of a historic Security Council resolution — resolution 1306 (2000). Adopted under Chapter VII of the Charter, the resolution called on all States to take the necessary measures to prohibit the direct or indirect import of all rough diamonds from Sierra Leone to their territory, except those rough diamonds controlled by the Government of Sierra Leone through the Certificate of Origin regime.

The Sierra Leone certification regime was a model for national and international efforts to curb the flow of conflict diamonds. Within a period of two years — and notwithstanding problems associated with controlling alluvial mining and with the activities of unscrupulous individuals who were determined to beat the system — the Security Council determined that certification was indeed helping to curb the illicit trade in diamonds from Sierra Leone. By 2003, the Council had found it necessary to terminate the prohibition. That was an acknowledgement of the significant progress that Sierra Leone had made in ending the conflict and extending Government authority throughout the country, including in the diamond-producing areas.

When blood diamonds are eradicated, as we hope they will be — especially from our West African subregion — there will still be a need for effective

machinery at the national, regional and international levels to ensure that the people in diamond-producing developing countries such as Sierra Leone derive more benefit from that precious mineral. With the end of the rebel war, we are making every effort to ensure that our diamonds make a positive contribution to our post-conflict reconstruction and poverty alleviation programme.

We continue to implement our diamond reform policies, including more effective internal control mechanisms. We are also taking proactive initiatives, such as the creation of the Diamond Area Community Development Fund. Although the export duty on Sierra Leone's rough and uncut diamonds is only 3 per cent of their export value, a quarter of the money we derive from the export duty is deposited in the Community Development Fund, to be used for community projects such as the rebuilding or building of schools and clinics. The Fund, which has disbursed more than $2.5 million during the past five years, also serves as a means of discouraging illicit mining and smuggling.

At the subregional level, Sierra Leone is trying to address the problem of the cross-border illicit trade in diamonds through, for example, harmonization of some of the provisions of the legal codes of the Mano River Union countries, which include Liberia, Guinea and Sierra Leone. We consider the Subregional Conference on Diamonds for Development, held in Monrovia last June, as an important step forward in addressing some of the challenges facing the diamond industry in those three countries. High-level delegations from Guinea and Liberia have been visiting Sierra Leone to obtain, among other things, relevant information on the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme in Sierra Leone.

In that connection, Sierra Leone is pleased that Liberia has expressed interest in participating in the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme. We also welcome the progress reported by Liberia in establishing a national diamond certification regime that should meet the requirements of the Kimberley Process. Sierra Leone looks forward to having Liberia as a member of the West Africa subgroup on alluvial mining.

As emphasized in the latest report of the Kimberley Process (A/61/589, annex), every annual assessment since the introduction of the Process has seen significant increases in the percentage of legitimate diamond production and sales. According to the report, the Kimberley Process has had a significant impact in curbing the illicit production of and trade in diamonds in countries affected by conflict diamonds.

Sierra Leone can attest to that. Our national Certificate of Origin regime, which became operational in 2000, and the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme have made invaluable contributions to the development of our diamond production. The value of rough diamonds exported from Sierra Leone rose from $10 million in 2000 to approximately $142 million in 2005.

Other factors contributing to that positive development include the end of the rebel war and the establishment of peace; the restoration of effective Government control over the mining areas; the creation of incentives to help curb illicit mining; and international cooperation, thanks to the contributions of the United Nations, the diamond industry and civil society worldwide.

Diamonds are a precious international commodity. The legitimate trade in diamonds is international in character, and so are the illicit transactions involving rough diamonds, or so-called conflict diamonds. The first preambular paragraph of the draft resolution before the Assembly (A/61/L.27) recognizes that the trade in conflict diamonds continues to be a matter of serious international concern. Therefore, the need for continued international cooperation and action to curb the trade in conflict diamonds cannot be overemphasized.

The efficacy and the future success of the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme will continue to depend on the highest level of international cooperation among producing, exporting and importing States, as well as on the contributions of regional organizations and civil society. In that regard, let me paraphrase the words of the Minister of Mineral Resources of Sierra Leone, speaking at a diamond consumer confidence workshop in Windhoek last month. He said that international cooperation is the way forward to enhance consensus and world peace. Despite the gap between developing and developed countries in terms of technological and financial status, they must all cooperate in finding solutions not only to the problems besetting the diamond industry, but also to other world problems. The Kimberley Process Certification Scheme is a good example of how

problems of an international nature should be addressed.

Mr. Gaspar Martins (Angola): I have the honour to speak on this important issue, on which there has been a great deal of progress in recent years. We congratulate Botswana and the European Commission on their election as Chair and Vice-Chair, respectively, of the Kimberley Process for 2006. Our congratulations go also to Canada on the excellent work undertaken during its chairmanship.

We associate ourselves with the statement made by His Excellency President Festus Mogae of Botswana in his capacity as Chairman of the Kimberley Process, and we express our sincere gratitude for the very clear and comprehensive report presented to us this morning. We are indeed very honoured with his presence at this important discussion.

Angola remains fully committed to working jointly with relevant governmental organizations of diamond-producing and importing countries, as well as legitimate private diamond companies and non-governmental organizations in fighting this serious scourge.

Efforts to address the problem of conflict diamonds started some time ago. In 2000, the Southern African Development Community (SADC) mining ministers, meeting in Cape Town, agreed that international action was imperative, as the problem negatively affects the trade in legitimate diamonds, which makes a critical contribution to the economies of those countries.

In this connection, when we last debated the role of diamonds in fuelling conflict, the overwhelming sense of the General Assembly was already one of satisfaction at the progress achieved by the international community through the Kimberley Process. The Assembly then welcomed in particular the introduction of a peer review system to provide assurances that all participants in the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme are in fact implementing its provisions.

Today, there is no doubt at all that the Kimberley Process is indeed a tremendous success. The excellent and comprehensive report presented by Botswana (A/61/589, annex), as Chair of the Kimberly Process itself, makes clear the extent to which the Certification Scheme has modified the diamond trade at the global level. We believe that only the widest possible participation in the Certification Scheme will achieve the results we all seek: a reduction of conflict and human suffering caused by the illegal trade in diamonds and other natural resources. The Kimberley Process has, therefore, given Governments a greater degree of control over their diamond resources. It has also clamped down on smuggling, with numerous cases of illicit diamonds being seized which would otherwise have ended up illegally in world markets.

Through resolutions 55/56 and 56/263, the General Assembly has a crucial role in breaking the link between the illicit transaction in rough diamonds and armed conflict. This represents an important contribution to the prevention and settlement of armed conflicts.

The progress achieved in the implementation of the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme clearly demonstrates what can be attained by the international community in addressing such issues of serious international concern as the illicit trade in diamonds. It is hoped that the United Nations will continue to support the implementation of the Kimberly Process, since it helps to ensure the effective implementation of relevant General Assembly and Security Council resolutions concerning the trade in conflict diamonds.

Since the very beginning, Angola has played an important role in international efforts to address the global trade in conflict diamonds, which have had a devastating impact on peace and human security in several African countries, particularly in Angola. In the case of Angola, it was important to ensure that decisions of the Security Council regarding sanctions were in fact translated into effective action. A key lesson drawn from this process concerns the measures to strengthen the role of the United Nations in the implementation of targeted sanctions, the necessary coordination among United Nations actors and the importance of sanctions committees that have the leading role in monitoring the implementation of Security Council targeted sanctions.

With the lessons learned from the implementation of international coordinated action in dealing with illicit diamond trading, particularly in Africa, at the initiative of Angola — specifically by the President of the Republic of Angola, His Excellency José Eduardo dos Santos — the African Countries Diamond

Producers Association was recently established. This organization is designed to coordinate action by African producers on the world diamond market, as well as to harmonize legislation and encourage foreign investment in the industry. This confirms the concerns of the Government of Angola in relation to the issue of the continued illegal trade of blood diamonds, particularly from Africa, as the continent accounts for nearly 60 per cent of world diamond production.

The newly established Diamond Producers Association could play a pivotal role as an institution that can bring together the producer countries and provide a forum for permanent cooperation in order to achieve sustainable growth in the industry, not only in Africa, but also in the world. In this connection, both producer and consumer countries should adopt measures to allow more active and concerted intervention with a view to transforming the gains achieved through diamonds into development.

The positive results achieved so far in the fight against conflict diamonds and the illicit trade in diamonds are evidence that the more united countries are, the better. The international community should continue to promote progress in the Kimberley Process in order to put an end to the role that diamonds play in financing wars and international terrorism.

Allow me to make a final observation. The wars that the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme was designed to tackle have now ended. But Angola believes that as a conflict prevention instrument, the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme remains vital. The draft resolution now before the General Assembly (A/61/L.27) will send a strong and clear message that the international community is not complacent regarding the continuing potential of diamonds in fuelling conflict.

We will continue to do whatever it takes to see that the issue of conflict diamonds continues to be addressed in a comprehensive manner through the implementation of the international certification scheme. We therefore look forward to the unanimous adoption of the draft resolution before us today, which we also sponsor.

The Acting President: In accordance with General Assembly resolution 3208 (XXIX) of 11 October 1974, I now call on the observer for the European Community to speak on behalf of the European Union.

Mr. Carro Castrillo (European Community): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union. The acceding countries Bulgaria and Romania, the candidate countries Turkey, Croatia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, the countries of the Stabilization and Association Process and potential candidates Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia, and the European Free Trade Association country Iceland, member of the European economic area, as well as Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova, align themselves with this statement.

Let me first welcome the excellent report of the Chair of the Kimberley Process (A/61/589, annex), His Excellency Mr. Festus Mogae, President of the Republic of Botswana.

The annual debate on the role of diamonds in fuelling conflict is an important opportunity for us to take stock of the progress made by the international community through the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme in combating the scourge of conflict diamonds.

This year we can, of course, draw on the findings of the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme's own internal review, based on the submissions of its participating countries, civil society, industry and, importantly, some of the United Nations missions on the ground in those countries that have suffered the curse of conflict diamonds.

The core finding of this review is that the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme remains necessary. The peace in some of the countries affected by conflict diamonds, such as in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Sierra Leone, remains all too fragile, and the United Nations diamond embargoes against Liberia and Côte d'Ivoire would be far less effective if there were no Certification Scheme.

The review also found that the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme is effective. It is not watertight, not perfect, but it is, nonetheless, effective in fulfilling its mandate. As mentioned by the Ambassador of Angola, we should also not neglect the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme's deterrent effect, although it is, of course, harder to measure.

The review also concluded that the flexible structure of the Certification Scheme has served it well, allowing it to focus on the issues, rather than on institutional questions. We think this makes it a real

model for the international community, a mechanism that was established relatively swiftly and focused on practical and pragmatic solutions, drawing strength from its legitimacy, inclusiveness and peer pressure, as well as from the access it offers to the international rough diamond trade. The Kimberley Process Certification Scheme may prove inspirational for dealing with other conflict resources, while recognizing the specificities of each context.

The review did recommend a number of improvements that could be made to the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme. Progress on implementing these recommendations will be a key challenge for next year.

Another challenge will be that of dealing with the situation of diamond production in the northern, rebel-held part of Côte d'Ivoire. The Kimberley Process has cooperated closely with the United Nations on this issue. The situation continues to present a very significant challenge to the Process, and indeed to peace and security in West Africa.

In the case of Ghana, the Kimberley Process has come up with an innovative way to respond to the finding by the United Nations group of experts that Ivorian diamonds may be being exported out of Ghana with a Kimberley Process Certificate. This solution protects the credibility of the Kimberley Process by providing a temporary mechanism to ensure that only stones of Ghanaian origin are exported with Ghanaian Kimberley certificates, while protecting Ghana's legitimate miners. Ghana will have a fair chance to improve its implementation, and its procedures will be evaluated after three months by a peer review mission.

Cooperation with the United Nations in this matter is crucial, as shown by these examples. We hope that the close working relationship between the Kimberley Process and the relevant bodies of the United Nations on this issue will continue over the course of the coming year. There could be no better indication of the importance of the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme and its inclusiveness than the continuing number of countries interested in joining. In the past year, New Zealand and Bangladesh have joined, and there are a number of others in line.

We are delighted to see the continuing progress in innovative the Kimberley Process peer review system, which has seen virtually every participant, and some applicants, invite on-the-ground monitoring and assessment of its implementation. As the Kimberley Process matures, it is starting to develop greater confidence, as demonstrated by the decision at the recent Gaborone plenary meeting to start publishing its own statistics on the international diamond trade. We hope that people will look at this data and analyse them, and come to us if they think the data indicate potential and possible implementation issues.

As for technical cooperation, the Process, under the effective coordination of the United States, has made good progress in ensuring that appropriate technical assistance, including training and geological production assessment, is made available to meet identified needs.

The European Union (EU) would like to express its gratitude to Botswana for the leadership it has displayed as Chair during the past year. Its authority has derived from its own unquestioned integrity and strong domestic controls. It has successfully steered the Kimberley Process through some turbulent times to sensible ways forward on West Africa and the review recommendations. The EU wishes to add its voice to those of other Governments, the international diamond industry and non-governmental organizations in congratulating Botswana on its achievements. Botswana, like its predecessors, South Africa, Canada and the Russian Federation, has set high standards indeed for the European Community to live up to as it succeeds those countries in the Chair of the Kimberley Process in 2007. We look forward to working closely with India, which has been appointed Vice-Chair for 2007, with all the participants and observers in the Kimberley family, and with the international community, as we build on past achievements to further strengthen implementation of the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme and to confront the challenges that continue to face us, in particular with respect to Côte d'Ivoire, and any others that may arise.

Let me conclude by urging the General Assembly to reiterate its strong support for the Kimberley Process by endorsing the draft resolution. The prospect of conflict diamonds remains a potential threat in a number of cases, and an actual one in the case of Côte d'Ivoire. The support of the United Nations is necessary for the Kimberley Process to successfully confront these challenges.

The Acting President: We have heard the last speaker in the debate on this agenda item.

The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/61/L.27, entitled "The role of diamonds in fuelling conflict: breaking the link between the illicit transaction of rough diamonds and armed conflict as a contribution to prevention and settlement of conflicts".

I should like to announce that, since the introduction of the draft resolution, the following countries have become sponsors of A/61/L.27: Australia, Austria, Belarus, Central African Republic, Croatia, Cyprus, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Guinea, Guyana, Indonesia, Latvia, Lesotho, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Mauritius, Moldova, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Ukraine and United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

May I take it that the Assembly decided to adopt draft resolution A/61/L.27?

Draft resolution A/61/L.27 was adopted (resolution 61/28).

The Acting President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 10?

It was so decided.

Reports of the Sixth Committee

The Acting President: The General Assembly will consider today the reports of the Sixth Committee on agenda items 33, 75 to 80, 100, 110, 118, 128, 148 and 153.

I request the Rapporteur of the Sixth Committee, Mr. Mamadou Moustapha Loum of Senegal, to introduce in one intervention the reports of the Sixth Committee before the General Assembly.

Mr. Loum (Senegal), Rapporteur of the Sixth Committee (*spoke in French*): It is my honour today to introduce to the General Assembly the reports of the Sixth Committee on the 13 agenda items referred to it, namely items 33, 75 to 80, 100, 110, 118, 128, 148 and 153. First, I will introduce the reports on items 75, 77, 80, 100, 110, 118 and 128, followed by those on items 33, 76, 78, 79, 148 and 153.

I wish first to address agenda item 75, entitled "Status of the Protocols Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and relating to the protection of victims of armed conflicts". The relevant report of the Sixth Committee is contained in document A/61/451, and the draft resolution that the Sixth Committee is recommending to the General Assembly for adoption appears in paragraph 8 of that document. By that draft resolution, the General Assembly would welcome the universal acceptance of the Geneva Conventions of 1949, would call upon all States parties to the Geneva Conventions that have not yet done so to consider becoming parties to the Additional Protocols at the earliest possible date, and would call upon States parties to the Additional Protocols to ensure their wide dissemination and full implementation.

It would also request the Secretary-General to submit to the Assembly at its sixty-third session a report, based on information received from Member States and the International Committee of the Red Cross, on the status of the Additional Protocols relating to the protection of victims of armed conflicts, as well as on measures taken to strengthen the existing body of international humanitarian law. Moreover, the Assembly would decide to include in the provisional agenda of its sixty-third session the item entitled "Status of the Protocols Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and relating to the protection of victims of armed conflicts".

The Sixth Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote and hopes that the General Assembly will be in a position to do the same.

I now wish to introduce the report of the Sixth Committee on agenda item 77, entitled "Report of the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law on the work of its thirty-ninth session". The relevant report of the Sixth Committee is contained in document A/61/453. The two draft resolutions that the Sixth Committee recommends be adopted by the General Assembly appear in paragraph 9 of that document.

By draft resolution I, entitled "Report of the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law on the work of its thirty-ninth session", the General Assembly, among other things, would approve the efforts made and the initiatives taken by the Commission as the core legal body of the United Nations system in the field of international trade law. It would also reaffirm the importance, in particular for developing countries, of the work of the Commission concerned with technical assistance and cooperation in the field of international trade law reform and

development. In that connection, it would appeal to Governments, the relevant bodies of the United Nations system, organizations, institutions and interested persons to make voluntary contributions to the special Trust Fund. Moreover, the Assembly would decide to continue in the competent Main Committees, its consideration of granting travel assistance to the least developed countries that are members of the Commission.

The General Assembly would encourage the Commission to further explore different approaches to the use of partnerships with non-State actors in the implementation of its mandate, in particular in the area of technical assistance. The Assembly would also welcome the preparation of digests of case law relating to texts before the Commission as well as the decision of the Commission to hold, in the context of its fortieth session, in 2007, a congress on international trade law in Vienna.

Draft resolution II under this agenda item relates to the revised articles of the Model Law on International Commercial Arbitration of the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law, and the recommendation regarding the interpretation of article II, paragraph 2, and article VII, paragraph 1, of the Convention on the Recognition and Enforcement of Foreign Arbitral Awards, done at New York on 10 June 1958. By this draft resolution, the General Assembly would express its appreciation to the Commission for formulating and adopting the revised articles and the recommendation, and would request the Secretary-General to make all efforts to ensure that the documents become generally known and available.

The Sixth Committee adopted the two draft resolutions without a vote and hopes the General Assembly will be in a position to do the same.

Allow me now to turn to agenda item 80, entitled "The rule of law at the national and international levels". The relevant report of the Sixth Committee is contained in document A/61/456, and the draft resolution recommended by the Sixth Committee to the General Assembly for adoption is contained in paragraph 9 of the report.

By that draft resolution, the General Assembly would request the Secretary-General to seek the views of Member States on matters pertaining to the issues addressed in the draft resolution and to submit a report thereon at its sixty-second session.

It would also request the Secretary-General to prepare an inventory of the current activities of the various organs, bodies, offices, departments, funds and programmes within the United Nations system devoted to the promotion of the rule of law at the national and international levels for submission at its sixty-third session, and to submit an interim report thereon at its sixty-second session.

It further requests the Secretary-General, after having sought the views of Member States, to prepare and submit at its sixty-third session, a report identifying ways and means for strengthening and coordinating the activities in question, with special regard to the effectiveness of assistance that may be requested by States in building capacity for the promotion of the rule of law at the national and international levels.

By this draft resolution the General Assembly would also urge the Secretary-General, as a matter of priority, to submit the report on the establishment of a rule of law assistance unit within the Secretariat, in conformity with paragraph 134 (e) of the 2005 World Summit Outcome.

The Sixth Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote and hopes that the General Assembly will be in a position to do the same.

I turn now to agenda item 100, entitled "Measures to eliminate international terrorism". The relevant report of the Sixth Committee is contained in document A/61/457, and the draft resolution recommended to the Assembly for adoption is contained in paragraph 11 of that document.

By the terms of the draft resolution, the General Assembly would call on all Member States, the United Nations and other appropriate international, regional and subregional organizations to implement the United Nations Global Anti-Terrorism Strategy in all its aspects without delay, and would recall its pivotal role in the implementation and updating of the Strategy. It would also recall its invitation to the Secretary-General to contribute to the future deliberations and request him when doing so to provide information on relevant activities within the Secretariat to ensure overall coordination and coherence in the counter-terrorism efforts of the United Nations system. Furthermore, the Assembly would decide that the Ad Hoc Committee established by resolution 51/210 of 17 December 1996 shall meet on 5, 6 and 15 February 2007 to continue on

an expedited basis to elaborate the draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism and to discuss the question of convening a high-level conference under the auspices of the United Nations.

The Sixth Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote and hopes that the General Assembly will be in a position to do the same.

I now draw attention to agenda item 110, entitled "Revitalization of the work of the General Assembly". The relevant report of the Sixth Committee is contained in document A/61/458, and the draft decision that the Sixth Committee is recommending to the General Assembly for adoption appears in paragraph 7 of that document, by which the General Assembly would note that the Sixth Committee has decided to adopt its provisional programme of work for the sixty-second session of the General Assembly, as proposed by the Bureau. According to the provisional programme of work, the Committee would begin work on 8 October 2007 and would complete its next session on 16 November 2007.

The Sixth Committee adopted its provisional programme of work for the sixty-second session without a vote, and I hope that the General Assembly will be in a position to do the same, by adopting the draft decision contained in paragraph 7 of the report.

Concerning agenda item 118, entitled "Programme planning", the relevant report of the Sixth Committee is contained in document A/61/459. The Sixth Committee considered the item and concluded that the subject did not call for any decision to be taken by the Committee. Accordingly, there is no draft resolution on the item.

Concerning agenda item 128, entitled "Administration of justice at the United Nations", the relevant report of the Sixth Committee is contained in document A/61/460. The draft decision adopted by the Sixth Committee appears in paragraph 10 of the report.

By that decision, the Sixth Committee would hold a resumed session of 10 meetings in March 2007, to consider the legal aspects of the report of the Redesign Panel on the United Nations system of administration of justice (A/61/205), taking into account, as appropriate, the comments that will be made by the Secretary-General on that subject, as well as those that may be made by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions.

The Sixth Committee adopted the draft decision without a vote and hopes that the General Assembly will be in a position to do the same.

(*spoke in English*)

I invite the Assembly to consider agenda item 33, entitled "Comprehensive review of the whole question of peacekeeping operations in all their aspects". The relevant report of the Sixth Committee is contained in document A/61/450, and the draft resolution that the Sixth Committee is recommending to the General Assembly for adoption appears in paragraph 7 of that document. Under the terms of the draft resolution, the General Assembly would, inter alia, decide to establish an Ad Hoc Committee open to all State Members of the United Nations or members of the specialized agencies or of the International Atomic Energy Agency, for the purpose of considering the report of the Group of Legal Experts established by the Secretary-General pursuant to resolution 59/300 to provide advice on the best way to succeed so as to ensure that the original intent of the Charter of United Nations can be achieved, namely that United Nations staff and experts on mission would never be effectively exempt from the consequences of criminal acts committed at their duty station, or unjustly penalized, in accordance with due process. The Ad Hoc Committee would meet from 9 to 13 April 2007 and would report on its work to the General Assembly at its sixty-second session, under the item entitled "Criminal accountability of United Nations officials and experts on mission". The Sixth Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote, and I hope that the Assembly will be in a position to do the same.

I turn now to agenda item 76, entitled "Consideration of effective measures to enhance the protection, security and safety of diplomatic and consular missions and representatives". The relevant report of the Sixth Committee is contained in document A/61/452, and the draft resolution that the Sixth Committee recommends to the Assembly for adoption is set out in paragraph 7 of that document.

Under the terms of the draft resolution, the Assembly would, inter alia, strongly condemn acts of violence against diplomatic and consular missions and representatives, as well as against missions and representatives of international intergovernmental organizations and officials of such organizations, and would urge States to take all appropriate measures at the national and international levels to prevent any

such acts of violence and to ensure, with the participation of the United Nations where appropriate, that such acts are fully investigated with a view to bringing offenders to justice.

The Sixth Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote, and I hope that the Assembly will be in a position to do the same.

I now invite the Assembly's attention to agenda item 78, entitled "Report of the International Law Commission on the work of its fifty-eighth session". The relevant report of the Sixth Committee is contained in document A/61/454 and the three draft resolutions recommended to the Assembly for adoption are reproduced in paragraph 13 of that document.

By the terms of draft resolution I, entitled "Report of the International Law Commission on the work of its fifty-eighth session", the General Assembly would, inter alia, take note of the report of the International Law Commission on the work of its fifty-eighth session and recommend that the Commission continue its work on the topics in its current programme, taking into account the observations of Governments, whether submitted in writing or expressed orally in debates in the General Assembly. The Assembly would also express its appreciation for the work accomplished by the Commission at its fifty-eighth session, noting in particular its various accomplishments. The Assembly would also draw the attention of Governments to the importance for the Commission of having their views on various topics on its agenda, as requested in chapter III of the 2006 report of the Commission, including in particular the draft articles and commentaries on the law of transboundary aquifers as well as information on legislation and practice on the topic of "The obligation to extradite or prosecute". Moreover, the Assembly would take note of the inclusion of five new topics in the Commission's long-term programme of work.

The Assembly would also address organizational matters concerning the working methods of the Commission, the structure of the Commission's report and conference servicing issues, in the light of previous decisions made by the Assembly concerning the documentation and summary records of the Commission. The Commission would meet at the United Nations Office at Geneva from 7 May to 8 June and from 9 July to 10 August 2007.

Moreover, the draft resolution refers to the improvements in the relationship between the Sixth Committee and the Commission, welcomes and encourages the improved dialogue, including informal consultations, and encourages delegations to adhere to the structured work programme in the debate on the Commission's report. It recommends that the debate on the report of the Commission at its fifty-ninth session commence on 29 October 2007.

By the terms of draft resolution II, entitled "Diplomatic protection", the General Assembly would express its appreciation to the International Law Commission for its continuing contribution to the codification and progressive development of international law, take note of the draft articles on diplomatic protection presented by the Commission and invite Governments to submit reports concerning the recommendation by the Commission to elaborate a convention on the basis of its draft articles. The Assembly would also decide to include in the provisional agenda of its sixty-second session an item entitled "Diplomatic protection".

Draft resolution III is entitled "Allocation of loss in the case of transboundary harm arising out of hazardous activities". By its terms, the Assembly would again express its appreciation to the Commission for its continuing contribution to the codification and progressive development of international law, take note of the principles on the allocation of loss in the case of transboundary harm arising out of hazardous activities, which appear in the annex, and commend them to the attention of Governments. It would also decide to include an item entitled "Consideration of prevention of transboundary harm from hazardous activities and allocation of loss in the case of such harm" in the provisional agenda of its sixty-second session.

The Sixth Committee adopted the three draft resolutions without a vote and it is hoped that the Assembly will do likewise.

I now draw the attention of the Assembly to agenda item 79, entitled "Report of the Special Committee on the Charter of the United Nations and on the Strengthening of the Role of the Organization". The report of the Sixth Committee on this item is contained in document A/61/455. The Sixth Committee recommends for adoption by the General Assembly

two draft resolutions, contained in paragraph 13 of the report.

Under the terms of the preamble of the draft resolution I, entitled "Commemoration of the sixtieth anniversary of the International Court of Justice", the Assembly would, inter alia, note that 2006 marks the sixtieth anniversary of the Court's inaugural sitting.

By operative paragraphs of the draft resolution, the Assembly would, inter alia, solemnly commend the International Court of Justice for the important role that it has played as the principal judicial organ of the United Nations over the past 60 years in adjudicating disputes among States, and express its appreciation to the Court for the measures adopted to operate an increased workload with maximum efficiency.

Furthermore, the Assembly would encourage States to continue considering recourse to the Court by means available under its Statute, and call upon States that have not yet done so to consider accepting the jurisdiction of the Court in accordance with its Statute. It would also call upon States to consider means of strengthening the Court's work, including by supporting the Secretary-General's Trust Fund to Assist States in the Settlement of Disputes through the International Court of Justice.

Under terms of draft resolution II, entitled "Report of the Special Committee on the Charter of the United Nations and on the Strengthening of the Role of the Organization", the General Assembly, among other things, would note with appreciation the adoption of the working methods of the Special Committee, contained in paragraph 72 of its 2006 report.

In addition, the Assembly would request the Special Committee, at its next session in 2007, to continue its consideration of all proposals concerning the question of the maintenance of international peace and security in all its aspects in order to strengthen the role of the United Nations. The Special Committee would also be requested to continue to consider, on a priority basis and in appropriate substantive manner and framework, the question of the implementation of the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations related to assistance to third States affected by the application of sanctions under Chapter VII of the Charter, and to consider, also on a priority basis, ways and means of improving its working methods and enhancing its efficiency with a view to identifying widely acceptable measures for future implementation. It would also be requested to keep on its agenda the question of the peaceful settlement of disputes between States.

Furthermore, the Special Committee would be requested to consider, as appropriate, any proposal referred to it by the General Assembly in the implementation of the decisions of the High-level Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly at its sixtieth session, in September 2005, that concern the Charter of the United Nations and any amendments thereto.

Additionally, the Assembly would commend the Secretary-General for the progress made in the preparation of studies of the *Repertory of Practice of United Nations Organs*, including the increased use of the internship programme of the United Nations and the wider cooperation with academic institutions for this purpose, as well as the progress made towards updating the *Repertoire of the Practice of the Security Council*. It would also call upon the Secretary-General to continue his efforts towards updating the two publications.

Let me now turn to agenda item 148, "Report of the Committee on Relations with the Host Country". The report of the Sixth Committee on this item is contained in document A/61/461. The draft resolution recommended to the Assembly for adoption is set out in paragraph 8 thereof.

Under the terms of the draft resolution, the Assembly would, inter alia, endorse the recommendations and conclusions of the Host Country Committee; consider that the maintenance of appropriate conditions for the normal work of the delegations and the missions accredited to the United Nations and the observance of their privileges and immunities are in the interest of the Organization and all Member States; and request the host country to continue to solve, through negotiations, problems that might arise, and to take all measures necessary to prevent any interference with the functioning of missions.

The Sixth Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote. It is hoped that the Assembly will be in a position to do likewise.

I would like to draw the Assembly's attention to agenda item 153, "Requests for observer status in the General Assembly". The relevant Committee report is contained in document A/61/462, and the three draft

resolutions recommended to the General Assembly for adoption are reproduced in paragraph 11 thereof.

By draft resolutions I, II and III entitled, respectively, "Observer status for the OPEC Fund for International Development in the General Assembly", "Observer status for the Indian Ocean Commission in the General Assembly" and "Observer status for the Association of Southeast Asian Nations in the General Assembly", the General Assembly would decide to invite, respectively, the OPEC Fund for International Development, the Indian Ocean Commission and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations to participate in the sessions and the work of the Assembly in the capacity of observer. It would also request the Secretary-General to take the necessary action to implement the present resolutions.

These three draft resolutions were adopted by the Sixth Committee without a vote, and I hope that the Assembly will be in a position to do the same.

(*spoke in French*)

This concludes my introduction to the reports of the Sixth Committee. Allow me at this stage, to express my great gratitude to the Chairman of the Sixth Committee, His Excellency Ambassador Juan Manuel Gómez Robledo of Mexico, for his tireless efforts and the efficiency and energy, which he brought to his guidance of the Sixth Committee at this session. I should also like to thank the other members of the Bureau — particularly Mr. Ganeson Sivagurunathan of Malaysia, Mr. Theodor Cosmin Onisii of Romania and Mr. Stefan Barriga of Liechtenstein — for their very valuable cooperation and support. Finally, I wish to thank all delegations and all of my colleagues whose essential contributions ensured the success of the Commission at its present session. And I cannot forget to pay special tribute to the Secretariat, whose dedication and professionalism have been of invaluable assistance.

The Acting President: If there is no proposal under rule 66 of the rules of procedure, I shall take it that the General Assembly decides not to discuss the reports of the Sixth Committee that are before it today.

It was so decided.

The Acting President: Statements will therefore be limited to explanations of vote or position. The positions of delegations regarding the recommendations of the Sixth Committee have been made clear in the Committee and are reflected in the relevant official records.

May I remind members that, under paragraph 7 of decision 34/401, the General Assembly agreed that

> "When the same draft resolution is considered in a Main Committee and in plenary meeting, a delegation should, as far as possible, explain its vote only once, i.e., either in the Committee or in plenary meeting, unless that delegation's vote in the plenary meeting is different from its vote in the Committee."

May I remind delegations that, also in accordance with General Assembly decision 34/401, explanations of vote are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Before we begin to take action on the recommendations contained in the reports of the Sixth Committee, I should like to advise representatives that we are going to proceed to take decisions in the same manner as was done in the Sixth Committee, unless the Secretariat is notified otherwise in advance. I therefore hope that we may proceed to adopt without a vote those recommendations that were adopted without a vote in the Sixth Committee.

Agenda item 33

Comprehensive review of the whole question of peacekeeping operations in all their aspects

Report of the Sixth Committee (A/61/450)

The Acting President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Sixth committee in paragraph 7 of its report.

We will now take a decision on the draft resolution, entitled "Criminal accountability of United Nations officials and experts on mission". The Sixth Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 61/29).

The Acting President: The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 33.

Agenda item 75

Status of the Protocols Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and relating to the protection of victims of armed conflicts

Report of the Sixth Committee (A/61/451)

The Acting President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Sixth Committee in paragraph 8 of its report.

We will now take a decision on the draft resolution. The Sixth Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 61/30).

The Acting President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 75?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 76

Consideration of effective measures to enhance the protection, security and safety of diplomatic and consular missions and representatives

Report of the Sixth Committee (A/61/452)

The Acting President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Sixth Committee in paragraph 7 of its report.

We will now take a decision on the draft resolution. The Sixth Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 61/31).

The Acting President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 76?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 77

Report of the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law on the work of its thirty-ninth session

Report of the Sixth Committee (A/61/453)

The Acting President: The Assembly has before it two draft resolutions recommended by the Sixth Committee in paragraph 9 of its report. We will now take decisions on draft resolutions I and II.

Draft resolution I is entitled "Report of the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law on the work of its thirty-ninth session". The Sixth Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft resolution I was adopted (resolution 61/32).

The Acting President: Draft resolution II is entitled "Revised articles of the Model Law on International Commercial Arbitration of the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law, and the recommendation regarding the interpretation of article II, paragraph 2, and article VII, paragraph 1, of the Convention on the Recognition and Enforcement of Foreign Arbitral Awards, done at New York, 10 June 1958". The Sixth Committee adopted draft resolution II without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

Draft resolution II was adopted (resolution 61/33).

The Acting President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 77?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 78

Report of the International Law Commission on the work of its fifty-eighth session

Report of the Sixth Committee (A/61/454)

The Acting President: The Assembly has before it three draft resolutions recommended by the Sixth Committee in paragraph 13 of its report. We will now take a decision on draft resolutions I, II and III.

We turn first to draft resolution I, entitled "Report of the International Law Commission on the work of its fifty-eighth session". The Sixth Committee adopted

it without a vote. May I consider that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft resolution I was adopted (resolution 61/34).

The Acting President: Draft resolution II is entitled "Diplomatic protection". The Sixth Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

Draft resolution II was adopted (resolution 61/35).

The Acting President: Draft resolution III is entitled "Allocation of loss in the case of transboundary harm arising out of hazardous activities". The Sixth Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft resolution III was adopted (resolution 61/36).

The Acting President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 78?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 79

Report of the Special Committee on the Charter of the United Nations and on the Strengthening of the Role of the Organization

Report of the Sixth Committee (A/61/455)

The Acting President: The Assembly has before it two draft resolutions recommended by the Sixth Committee in paragraph 13 of its report. We will now take a decision on draft resolutions I and II.

We turn first to draft resolution I, entitled "Commemoration of the sixtieth anniversary of the International Court of Justice". The Sixth Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft resolution I was adopted (resolution 61/37).

The Acting President: Draft resolution II is entitled "Report of the Special Committee on the Charter of the United Nations and on the Strengthening of the Role of the Organization". The Sixth Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

Draft resolution II was adopted (resolution 61/38).

The Acting President: May I take it that it is the wish of the Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 79?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 80

The rule of law at the national and international levels

Report of the Sixth Committee (A/61/456)

The Acting President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Sixth Committee in paragraph 9 of its report.

We will now take a decision on the draft resolution. The Sixth Committee adopted it without a vote. May I consider that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 61/39).

The Acting President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 80?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 100

Measures to eliminate international terrorism

Report of the Sixth Committee (A/61/457)

The Acting President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Sixth Committee in paragraph 11 of its report.

We will now take a decision on the draft resolution. The Sixth Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 61/40).

The Acting President: I give the floor to the representative of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, who wishes to speak in explanation of position on the draft resolution just adopted.

Mr. Gómez González (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) (*spoke in Spanish*): The delegation of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela joined the consensus on the draft resolution in paragraph 11 of the report of the Sixth Committee contained in document A/61/457, on measures to eliminate international terrorism. However, we would like to point out that in the twenty-first preambular paragraph, which refers to recent developments and initiatives at the regional and subregional level to prevent and suppress international terrorism, the reference to a military organization — the North Atlantic Treaty Organization — does not imply that the perspectives of such an organization should be accepted. Nor, in my delegation's opinion, should it set a precedent for future consideration of this very important issue. My delegation will continue to provide support in the quest for a global consensus that allows for concrete and concerted actions to combat international terrorism in all its forms and manifestations.

The Acting President: The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 100.

Agenda item 110

Revitalization of the work of the General Assembly

Report of the Sixth Committee (A/61/458)

The Acting President: The Assembly has before it a draft decision recommended by the Sixth Committee in paragraph 7 of its report.

We will now take action on the draft decision. The Sixth Committee adopted the draft decision, entitled "Provisional programme of work of the Sixth Committee for the sixty-second session of the General Assembly". May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft decision was adopted.

The Acting President: The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 110.

Agenda item 118

Programme planning

Report of the Sixth Committee (A/61/459)

The Acting President: May I take it that the General Assembly wishes to take note of the report of the Sixth Committee?

It was so decided.

The Acting President: The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 118.

Agenda item 128

Administration of justice at the United Nations

Report of the Sixth Committee (A/61/460)

The Acting President: The Assembly has before it a draft decision recommended by the Sixth Committee in paragraph 10 of its report.

We will now take action on the draft decision. The Sixth Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft decision was adopted.

The Acting President: The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 128.

Agenda item 148

Report of the Committee on Relations with the Host Country

Report of the Sixth Committee (A/61/461)

The Acting President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Sixth Committee in paragraph 8 of its report.

We will now take a decision on the draft resolution. The Sixth Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 61/41).

The Acting President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 148?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 153

Requests for observer status in the General Assembly

Report of the Sixth Committee (A/61/462)

The Acting President: The Assembly has before it three draft resolutions recommended by the Sixth Committee in paragraph 11 of its report. We will now take a decision on draft resolutions I, II and III.

Draft resolution I is entitled "Observer status for the OPEC Fund for International Development in the General Assembly". The Sixth Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft resolution I was adopted (resolution 61/42).

The Acting President: Draft resolution II is entitled "Observer status for the Indian Ocean Commission in the General Assembly". The Sixth Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

Draft resolution II was adopted (resolution 61/43).

The Acting President: Draft resolution III is entitled "Observer status for the Association of Southeast Asian Nations in the General Assembly". The Sixth Committee adopted draft resolution III without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft resolution III was adopted (resolution 61/44).

The Acting President: The General Assembly has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of agenda item 153.

The General Assembly has thus concluded its consideration of all the reports of the Sixth Committee before it.

Agenda item 44 (*continued*)

Culture of peace

Draft resolution (A/61/L.16)

The Acting President: Members will recall that the Assembly held its debate on agenda item 44 at its 47th and 48th plenary meetings, held on 3 November 2006.

We shall now proceed to consider draft resolution A/61/L.16. The Assembly will take action on draft resolution A/61/L.16, entitled "International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence for the Children of the World, 2001-2010".

I wish to announce that since the introduction of the draft resolution, the following countries have become sponsors: Afghanistan, Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Azerbaijan, Barbados, Belarus, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Cape Verde, the Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Dominica, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Fiji, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Islamic Republic of Iran, Iraq, Jamaica, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, the Marshall Islands, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, the Federated States of Micronesia, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, the Philippines, Portugal, Qatar, the Russian Federation, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, the Sudan, Suriname, the Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkmenistan, the United Arab Emirates, Uzbekistan, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/61/L.16?

Draft resolution A/61/L.16 was adopted (resolution 61/45).

The Acting President: I wish to inform Member States that action on draft resolution A/61/L.11 will be taken at a later date, to be announced.

The General Assembly has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of agenda item 44.

Agenda item 108 (*continued*)

Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations

(c) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations

Draft resolution (A/61/L.13)

The Acting President: Members will recall that the Assembly held its debate on agenda item 108 and its sub-items (a) to (t) at its 38th and 39th plenary meetings, held on 20 October 2006.

I now give the floor to the representative of the Philippines to introduce draft resolution A/61/L.13.

Mr. Baja (Philippines): I have the honour to introduce the draft resolution contained in document A/61/L.13, entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations", sponsored by the 10 States members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), namely Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Viet Nam, and sponsored also by 72 other countries from the Asia-Pacific region, Africa, Latin America, the Caribbean and Europe, which are listed in documents A/61/L.13 and A/61/L.13/Add.1.

ASEAN is a dynamic, outward-looking organization with a long history of close relations with various countries and regional and international organizations, in particular the United Nations. Home to more than 500 million people representing 8 per cent of the world population, with a combined gross domestic product of almost $900 billion and total trade of over $1 trillion, ASEAN has a significant impact on world affairs, both politically and economically.

ASEAN was founded on the same principles as those guiding the United Nations. In their relations with one another, ASEAN member countries exhibit mutual respect for the independence, sovereignty, equality, territorial integrity and national identity of all nations; recognize the right of every State to a national existence free from external interference, subversion and coercion; adopt a policy of non-interference in one another's internal affairs; settle differences and disputes by peaceful means; renounce the threat or use of force; and undertake effective cooperation among themselves.

ASEAN and the United Nations have had a long history together, having begun their relationship, through the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), when ASEAN was first established in 1967. In the four decades that have since elapsed, that relationship has been nurtured and developed. The first ASEAN-United Nations Summit, held at Bangkok on 12 February 2000, and the adoption of two General Assembly resolutions on ASEAN–United Nations cooperation, in 2002 and 2004, have also served to elevate and strengthen the relationship.

The second ASEAN-United Nations Summit, held on 13 September 2005 at United Nations Headquarters in New York, further enhanced that relationship and provided future direction for cooperation between ASEAN and the United Nations. During the Summit, ASEAN leaders and the United Nations Secretary-General agreed to further broaden ASEAN-United Nations cooperation with the involvement of various United Nations specialized agencies on key issues related to development, such as poverty eradication, the Millennium Development Goals, energy security, the prevention and control of infectious diseases, disaster management, trans-national issues, and peace and security. We would like to highlight the progress that has been made so far in the context of cooperation in those areas.

In the area of development, UNDP, in conjunction with ASEAN, continues to conduct training programmes and workshops to strengthen the capacities of Member States in designing and formulating project proposals as well as manage the regional integration process in accordance with various ASEAN plans of action.

On energy security, United Nations agencies have been working with ASEAN to find appropriate ways and means to strengthen international efforts to promote the more efficient use of energy. The ASEAN Centre for Energy is currently closely cooperating with the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and UNDP on various projects such as energy-integrated urban planning and the promotion of local manufacturing of renewable energy equipment in ASEAN.

In the area of health, ASEAN's closer collaboration with the relevant United Nations agencies has resulted in greater assistance in

preventing and controlling resurging infectious diseases.

As concerns disaster management, ASEAN and the United Nations, through the support and assistance of UNDP, are discussing the implementation of humanitarian emergency response coordination in disaster-relief operations and in public awareness and capacity-building, as agreed at the Special ASEAN Leaders' Meeting on the Aftermath of the Earthquake and Tsunami.

On peace and security, ASEAN continues to support the United Nations in its role of maintaining international peace and security, developing friendly relations among nations and achieving international cooperation in the resolution of international problems. ASEAN initiatives such as the Zone of Peace, Freedom and Neutrality Declaration, the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in South-East Asia, the Declaration of ASEAN Concord, the Treaty on the South-East Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone, the establishment of the ASEAN Regional Forum, the ASEAN Plus Three process, the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea, and regional actions undertaken in cooperation with the United Nations with regard to Cambodia and East Timor, have significantly contributed to peace, security and stability in the region.

This year, ASEAN has been granted observer status in the General Assembly, which will further deepen cooperation between ASEAN and the United Nations. ASEAN's status as an observer in the United Nations will also broaden and deepen ASEAN's interaction with other United Nations Member States and regional and international organizations in their common pursuit of peace, justice and the rule of law.

We are extremely grateful to all those countries which have sponsored the draft resolution on cooperation between the United Nations and ASEAN. We hope that the draft resolution will be adopted by consensus, as was the previous one during the fifty-ninth session.

The meeting rose at 12.55 p.m.